

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 ACDA-12 EB-08 CA-01 SCS-06 DLOS-09 CG-00
DOTE-00 TRSE-00 COME-00 OES-07 /121 W
-----010103 141105Z /10

P 141048Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7087
INFO USLO PEKING PRIORITY
AMCONSUL NAHA
OAC CAMP BUTLER OKINAWA JA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 06516

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR,,:3*8 , JA, CH
SUBJECT: CHINESE FISHING BOATS STILL OFF SENKAKUS

REF: TOKYO 06393 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. CHINESE FISHING BOATS, FOR THIRD DAY, HAVE
REFUSED TO LEAVE JAPANESE-CLAIMED TERRITORIAL WATERS
OFF SENKAKU ISLANDS. LDP LEADERS, INCLUDING OHIRA,
FEEL CHINESE ACTIONS HAVE TORPEDOED PFT TALKS. MOSCOW,
MEANWHILE, IS PLEASED. END SUMMARY.

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1. JAPANESE MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY (MSA) SOURCE INFORMED
US THAT AS OF 12:30 PM APRIL 14, 21 CHINESE FISHING
BOATS REMAINED IN JAPANESE-CLAIMED TERRITORIAL WATERS
OFF SENKAKU ISLANDS (REFTEL). MANY BOATS WERE ARMED
WITH MACHINE GUNS, AND FEW SEEMED TO BE FISHING.
MSA HAS SET UP SPECIAL PATROL HEADQUARTERS IN NAHA,
AND HAS SEVEN PATROL SHIPS IN AREA AS WELL AS THREE

AIRCRAFT, WITH TWO MORE PATROL SHIPS TO BE ADDED TOMORROW.

2. JAPANESE CABINET MET APRIL 14 TO CONSIDER PROBLEM, WHICH IS RAPIDLY BECOMING MAJOR POLITICAL/DIPLOMATIC ISSUE FOR JAPANESE. JAPANESE MINISTER DONOWAKI MET CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY ASIAN AFFAIRS DEPUTY DIRECTOR WANG IN PEKING MORNING OF APRIL 14 TO CONVEY JAPANESE POSITION RE SENKAKSU. (MEETING WAS FOLLOW-UP TO APRIL 13 REPRESENTATION BY MOFA CHINA DIVDIR TAJIMA TO CHINESE EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY SUNG WEN.) MOFA CHINA DIVOFF TOLD EMBOFF THAT WANG, AFTER REPEATING PRC POSITION THAT SENKAKUS WERE CHINESE, TOLD DONOWAKI: PRC WOULD INVESTIGATE PRESENCE OF CHINESE FISHING BOATS OFF SENKAKUS. GOJ HAS SAID PUBLICLY IT WOULD LIKE TO STUDY RESULTS OF WANG-DONOWAKI MEETING BEFORE COMMENTING FURTHER.

3. JAPANESE PAPERS APRIL 14 QUOTED TOP-RANKING LDP OFFICIAL AS SAYING PRESENCE OF CHINESE FISHING BOATS OFF SENKAKUS HAD RAISED TERRITORIAL ISSUE BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN, THUS MAKING IT DIFFICULT FOR JAPAN EVEN TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH CHINA ON PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY (PFT). OFFICIAL ALSO SAID HIS STATEMENT REFLECTED UNANIMOUS VIEW OF LDP LEADERSHIP.

4. JAPANESE SOURCE CLOSE TO OHIRA TELLS US THAT OFFICIAL
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IN QUESTION WAS LDP SECRETARY GENERAL OHIRA. OHIRA REPORTEDLY SAID THAT CONTINUED PRESENCE OF CHINESE FISHING BOATS OFF SENKAKUS HAD MADE CONCLUSION OF PFT IMPOSSIBLE, NOT JUST FOR PRESENT FUKUDA CABINET, BUT FOR AN OHIRA CABINET AS WELL. OHIRA, A PFT ADVOCATE, WHO WAS FONMIN WHEN JAPAN NORMALIZED RELATIONS WITH CHINA IN 1972, WAS PARTICULARLY UPSET BY RESPONSE OF CHINESE EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY SUNG IN APRIL 13 MEETING WITH MOFA CHINA DIVDIR TAJIMA. SUNG NOT ONLY ASSURED THAT SENKAKUS BELONGED TO CHINA, BUT ALSO REPORTEDLY REFERRED TO CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT OF DECEMBER 30, 1971. OHIRA INTERPRETED THIS 1971 REFERENCE AS DELIBERATE CHINESE ABROGATION OF TACIT AGREEMENT, MADE DURING NORMALIZATION TALKS OF 1972, TO PUT ASIDE QUESTION OF SENKAKUS. OHIRA THEREFORE DOUBTED THAT PFT TALKS COULD BE RESUMED WITHOUT DIRECTLY ADDRESSING STICKY TERRITORIAL ISSUE.

5. COMMENT: CHINESE ACTIONS WHICH HAVE AROUSED CONSIDERABLE NATIONALIST SENTIMENT HERE, HAVE SERVED TO DEFLECT PUBLIC ATTENTION, AT LEAST FOR MOMENT, FROM NORTHERN TERRITORIES ISSUE. WE NOTE THAT MOSCOW HAS

INDIGNANTLY ACCUSED CHINESE OF PURSUING "MAOIST POLICY WHICH SUPPORTS TERRITORIAL CLAIMS AGAINST NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES."

6. DILEMMA FOR GOJ WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY ACUTE AS TIME PASSES. PRESS REPORTS TODAY NOTE THAT IN COURSE OF MONITORING SITUATION IN SENKAKUS, MSDF CHASED TWO TAIWANESE BOATS FROM AREA, AN ACTION WHICH IN SENSE SIMPLY UNDERSCORED GOJ INEFFECTUALITY VIS-A-VIS PRC FLEET. IF PRC BOATS HANG AROUND MUCH LONGER, THIS WILL BECOME MAJOR POLITICAL HEADACHE FOR FUKUDA, AND MAY GIVE RISE TO TALK ABOUT NEED TO RE-THINK JAPANESE FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY AS IT AFFECTS MAJOR COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS. MANSFIELD
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